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DESCRIPTIVE AND PLAINTIVE

E L E G Y,

ON THE DEATH OF THE LATE

Reverend J O H N W E S L E Y:

By T H O M A S O L I V E R S.

Servant of God, well done, well hast thou fought
The better Fight,——

MILTON.

L O N D O N:

Printed by G. PARAMORE, *North-Green*, Worship-Street;

And sold by G. WHITFIELD, New-Chapel, City-Road; J. PARSONS, No. 21,
Paternoster-Row; and by all the Bookfellers in Town and Country. 1791.

[PRICE SIXPENCE.]



An E L E G Y, &c.

SILENCE ye Storms! nor softest Zephyrs blow,
To dissipate the Gloom which reigns below :
But deepest Shades of Night, your darkest Horror shed,
To aid my penfive Muse, to mourn the silent Dead.

But chiefly Thou, Great Healer of Mankind,
Whose only Balm can ease the troubled mind ;
Support my sinking head, and all my pains control,
While I rehearse aloud, the sorrows of my soul.

The Man I lov'd, the Man by Thousands priz'd,
By Angels honour'd ; but by Fools despis'd ;
Hath clos'd his eyes in Death ! and left me here in Pain,
To sigh, and mourn, and weep, while Life and Love remain.

O Tale of Woe ! expand thy ebon wings,
 And fly to Palaces, to Courts and Kings ;
 Then swiftly mount aloft, and sound from shore to shore,
 Thy Friend, thy Father's fled, thy WESLEY is no more !

The Tale is gone ! it mourns along the Plain ;
 The Up-lands sadden, and the Hills complain !
 The Woods, and shady Groves, assume a darker shade,
 While Sighs, and Sadness reign in ev'ry pensive Glade.

As on the Hills the watchful Shepherd stands,
 He hears the Tale below, and lifts his hands ;
 Then sighs, and smites his breast, and drowns his path with tears,
 And to his lonely Cot the mournful Tidings bears !

The hardy Hind, who turns his Furrows o'er,
 Goes on and weeps, 'till he can weep no more !
 Then quits his Callous-hold, and leaves his Team behind,
 While he in rustic Strains, relieves his troubled mind.

The

The hoary Sire, with Cares and Years opprest,
Leans on his Staff, and smites his aged breast;
Then homeward bends his way, and strives to mend his pace,
To spread the mournful Tale, through all his natal place.

The Virgin-train who grace the rural Throng,
Nor lead the Village-Dance, nor aid the Song;
Nor bloom like Sharon's Rose, nor hail the welcome Spring,
But with loud Cries and Woes make all their Hamlets ring!

The youthful Swains are now no longer seen,
To play their Gambols o'er the neighb'ring green;
Their Mirth is sadly chang'd to solitary Woe,
While through the lonely Glades and Villages they go!

Nor rural Nymphs, nor rustic Swains alone;
But all our Towns, and Streets, partake our moan:
They swell our deepest Groans, and echo back our Cries,
And mix their Tears with ours, and urge them through the Skies.

Ev'n

Ev'n Cits and gay Coquets, unus'd to weep,
 Show signs of Sorrow as they crowd the street : [road,*
 Then turn, and change their course, and throng the neighb'ring
 To view his last Remains, in his forlorn abode.

They see his last Remains, and bless the sight,
 And own, The things he taught must needs be right :
 Then bow, and inly pray, they may his steps pursue,
 And vow, while Life remains, to keep his End in view.

The Men of Rank and Fame their Loss deplore,
 And wish the season back, which comes no more :
 Could we, alas ! they cry, his shining path pursue,
 We should be Great indeed ! and Bless'd and Happy too.

Fair Science now puts on her sad attire,
 And from the studious groves her Sons retire,
 They kiss his learned Toil, and bow their pensive head,
 And mourn such Wisdom lost among the common Dead.

Not

* This is literally true:

Nor Foes (for foes he had !) can now forbear
 To loath their own, while they his Deeds declare :
 For all the Good he did, they now at least descry,
 And Fain like him would Live, and Wish like him to Die.

Nor Envy now no more reluctant seems
 To own the Worth she in her Heart Esteems :
 But calls him Great and Good, and Truly Learn'd and Wise,
 And spreads his Fame abroad, to All in Earth and Skies !

Pale Indigence draws near, with all her train ;
 She looks, and looks again, but all in vain !
 Then weeps, and cries aloud, and all her grief relates,
 And spreads ten thousand Tears, around his sacred gates.

As home she goes, but goes without supplies,
 Where is the Good Man gone ! the Orphan cries :
 I know he's not at home, or we had better sped ;
 But sure as he returns, we shall again be fed.

The

The Mother hears! then tears her squalid hair!
 Looks wild! and raves! and yields to black despair!
 Then vends her mighti'ft Woe, in many a doleful cry!
 And bears her Orphan off, to pine, and weep, and die!

With penfive ears he heard the Aged moan,
 And faw their tears, and mixt them with his own:
 Then stretch'd his lib'ral hand, and fhared his frugal ftore,
 And gave them all he could, and Wifh'd to give them more.

The Vagrant Poor, fufpected, and defpis'd,
 Were oft reliev'd by him, and fometimes priz'd:
 And though the Boon was fmall, he gave it with fuch grace,
 As fpread Confufion o'er their feign'd, and harden'd face.

When he had nought, and could no longer give,
 He cry'd aloud, and BEGG'D the Poor might live:
 Nor would he ceafe to beg, till he his fuit obtain'd,
 Though Niggards flopt their ears, and all his cries difdain'd.

But

But those of Worth who bear the Sacred Cross,
 Revere his Labours, and lament the Loss
 Of one who taught and urg'd, like those renown'd of old,
 To share among the Poor, their Hoards of uselefs Gold.

But deeper woes distract my tortur'd mind,
 They come from ev'ry Coast, with ev'ry Wind:
 His Children mourn aloud, nor can they e'er refrain,
 While ought of filial Love, or Gratitude remain.

Ah me! they cry, and is our Father fled?
 And is he number'd with the silent dead!
 And is he gone at last, to that celestial shore,
 And shall our wishful eyes behold him here no more!

O Mighty Woe! O Loss beyond redress!
 Kind Heav'n assist! while we our Woes express!
 Our drooping heads lift up, and loose our stamm'ring tongue,
 While we proclaim abroad, what he for us hath done.

B

When

When wand'ring wide, and o'er the mountains spread,
Like Sheep without a Shepherd at their head;
He kindly fought us out, and in his arms embrac'd,
And banish'd all our Grievs, and all our Fears effac'd.

When Dangers prefs'd, or Foes appear'd in fight,
He stood between, and put them all to flight:
Then led us safely on, and shew'd our feet the way
To Peace, and Hope, and Love, and Everlasting Day.

When Grief affail'd, he heard our ev'ry moan,
Wept when we wept, and made our Grievs his own:
Nor would he cease to grieve, while we of aught complain'd;
But strove to bear us up, 'till we our Joy regain'd.

In all our Joys, he gladly bore a part,
And met our Transports with a bounding heart:
Then look'd around on all, with Smiles of softest grace,
And blest'd our happy lot, and kiss'd our blushing face.

When

When Songs of heav'nly Praise employ'd our Tongues,
 He join'd, with Heart and Voice, to aid our Songs:
 To guide and guard our Strains, he wav'd his hands on high,
 Left one discordant note pass'd uncorrected by.

If e'er our Lukewarm souls grew cold and dead,
 And all his mild Reproofs flew o'er our head;
 He chang'd his softer notes, and look'd with sterner brow,
 And fain would use the Rod; but O! he knew not how.

When Feuds and Contests rose to wound our peace,
 His Prudence soon prevail'd to make them cease:
 He heard our sad Complaints! then look'd, and meekly smil'd;
 We blush'd, and then shook hands, and so were reconcil'd!

Befet on ev'ry side with worldly cares,
 He warn'd us Night and Day, with many tears,
 To shun the dang'rous road, where twice ten Thousand fell,
 Who barter'd Grace for Gold, and now lament in Hell!

If Young or Old appear'd in costly Drefs,
 He blam'd us o'er and o'er, for fuch Excefs :
 Be Plain and Neat, he cry'd, and frugal of your Store,
 Nor dare to Rob your God, by robbing of the Poor.

Whene'er we stray'd, by Sin or Error led,
 He fought, and found us out, wherever fled :
 Then kindly call'd us back, and fpread his arms abroad,
 To help our weaknefs home, to Happinefs and God.

That we no more might stray, or lag behind,
 Our faithful Shepherd bore us on his mind :
 He watch'd, and wept, and warn'd, when fin appear'd in view,
 Left greater Ills o'ertook, than all we ever knew.

Be wife, he cry'd, and fhun the paths of fin ;
 Be bold ! be firm ! nor let the Foe break in :
 March on with cheerful feet, and fing your choicelt Song ;
 Nor fear your labour loft, nor think your journey long.

While

While those who know you not, for Forms contend,
Be Faith and Hope your Guide, and Love your End :
Let these direct your feet, and raise your heads on high,
Where Faith and Hope shall cease, and Love shall never die.

Yet while you here remain, your Load to bear,
Let Works of Right'ousness your Faith declare :
Be just and kind to those who all your Good despise,
And show to all around, your Sonship in the Skies.

But chiefly Those who love the Saviour's name,
Who Prize his Scandal, and Enjoy his shame ;
To each of these extend your arms of Love abroad,
And serve, and love them well, and only less than God.

And as you pass through Life's uneven way,
Pray for your Guides, and without ceasing pray :
Support our feeble Hands, when to the Mount we go,
And Thus reward our Toil, and Thus your kindness show.

O grant

O grant this only boon! 'Tis all we crave,
 That we in helping you, ourselves may save :
 That we may Faithful prove, and to the end endure,
 And wear the Crown of Right'ousness to conquest sure.

As Life so soon is o'er, your Time redeem,
 And give your Hearts to God, and live to Him :
 Then wait in patient Hope your Summons to the Skies,
 Where Pain, and Grief are o'er, and Death for ever dies.

'Twas Thus our faithful Guide his course pursu'd,
 Nor Toil, nor Danger shunn'd to do us good ;
 But gladly bore the Cross, that we the Prize might gain,
 And one with Him and God, through endless Ages reign.

Nor was his Toil and Care to us confin'd,
 He daily fought the Good of all Mankind :
 That they might Seek and Know, in this their gracious day,
 The Way to endless Peace ; and cast their sins away.

He

He wish'd that All might find their Pardon seal'd,
 Their Fears remov'd, and feel their Conscience heal'd :
 That Peace, and Joy, and Hope, might here their portion be,
 And Love, and sweet Delight, to all Eternity.

For this his cheerful feet pursu'd their way,
 Through Winter's nights, and Summer's sultry day : [Main,
 Through Woods, and Floods, he pass'd, and o'er the boist'rous
 Nor e'er was known to shrink, or of his Toil complain !

While o'er the Mountain-tops he often went,
 He met the rapid Storms with sweet Content !
 Then swiftly mov'd along the Dark and Doubtful track,
 And chid his Coward Steed, who fain would turn his back ! *

He often rode, as through the land he pass'd,
 Full Thirty Miles, before he broke his fast !
 Then added Thirty more, before he stopt to dine !
 And Ten or Twenty more, before his preaching-time ! †

When

* Strictly true.

† This is a real fact.

When worn with Toil, and Age, and fore Disease,
 He rode an eafier way, his Friends to please :
 But neither Friends, nor Age, his wonted fpeed could ftay ;
 For now he often went, HIS HUNDRED MILES A DAY ! *

To live for God, while in this vale of Tears,
 He rofe at Four o'Clock, for Threefcore Years ! †
 Then fpent the live-long day in fomewhat great and good :
 Nor loung'd one Hour away, nor ever ling'ring flood !

When he in youthful days his courfe begun,
 And rofe refplendent, like the rifing Sun !
 Both Earth and Hell purfu'd, and wag'd a dreadful fight,
 To blaft the opening Bloom, and quench the kind'ling Light.

For this the Rich and Great their Influen'ce fpread,
 And Sleeping Shepherds rais'd their Drowfy Head :
 While Formal Saints exclaim'd, where'er he fhew'd his face,
 And Scandal Croak'd around, her Falfe and Foul Difgrace !

By

* This is a real Faft.

† This is a well known Faft.

By these the Human-herds were gather'd round,
 Who fought with Sticks and Stones, or ought they found ;
 Who tore his Raiment off, and bruis'd his sacred Head ! *
 Nor could they scarce refrain, before they thought him dead !

Through Tumults, Toils, and Strife, he urg'd his way,
 And dar'd the Ills of life his feet to stay !
 The ills he Saw and Felt, but rais'd his bosom High'r,
 And kinder Pity gave, and more intense desire.

As Truth is great, and will in time prevail,
 His foes fell off, and would no more assail ;
 But turn'd their Hate to Love, and own'd the Truth he taught,
 And Ble's'd the happy Day which such Glad Tidings brought.

Now Thousands turn'd, and Twice Ten Thousand more,
 And mourn'd the Hated Deeds they did before :
 Then half the wond'ring world their Gratitude express'd,
 And threw their arms abroad, and clasp'd him to their breast.

C

Ye

* This is another undoubted Fact,

Yet still he onward went, with steady pace,
As much unmov'd by Smiles, as by Disgrace :
Nor would he ought Abate, though oft befought with tears !
But kept one even pace, for MORE THAN THREE-SCORE YEARS ! *

That this is no Romance, one instance hear,
And may it rend in twain each Sluggard's Ear !
His last day's-work, but one, he plann'd, and thought to ride,
A HUNDRED MILES AND EIGHT ! and Preach, and Write beside ! †

To feed his flock he put forth all his Might,
And preach'd the word both Morning, Noon, and Night :
Nor did he ever cease, while we had time to hear ;
But preach'd, or someways taught, A THOUSAND TIMES A YEAR ! ‡

Besides the rest, which we assert as Facts,
He wrote in all above Two Hundred Tracts !
And yet, in ev'ry Year, a Thousand Missives sent,
Through this, and various Isles, and ev'ry Continent ! ||

* This is strictly, literally true.

† This is a real Fact.

‡ This is another Fact.

|| Another Fact.

'Twas

'Twas Thus his Years, and Days, and Hours were spent ;
 'Twas Thus he us'd the Goods his Master lent :
 'Twas Thus—we say no more, but this great Truth rehearse,
 He did what Man could do, To Bless The Universe !

At last the Mortal Foe his Dart prepar'd ;
 We saw, and wept, and each his grief declar'd :
 Then try'd each fruitless means, to shield his sacred head ;
 Nor would we cease to try, when all our hopes were fled !

But he unmov'd beheld his End draw nigh,
 And met the coming-foe without a sigh ;
 Then rais'd his feeble voice, though with a fault'ring tongue,
 And spread his arms abroad, and thus divinely sung :

[' All glory to God in the Sky,
 " And peace upon earth be restor'd ;
 " O Jesus exalted on high,
 " Appear our omnipotent Lord !

“ Who meanly in Bethlehem born,
 “ Didst stoop to redeem a lost race ;
 “ Once more to thy people return,
 “ And reign in thy kingdom of grace.

“ O wouldst thou again be made known,
 “ Again in thy Spirit descend,
 “ And set up in each of thine own,
 “ A kingdom that never shall end.
 “ Thou only art able to bless,
 “ And make the glad nations obey,
 “ And bid the dire enmity cease,
 “ And bow the whole world to thy sway.”]

When he was quite derang'd, or flumb'ring laid,
 No wild, or vagrant Thought his Tongue betray'd !
 But what he said before, he said it now again ;
 And still forgot his own, to ease his brother's pain.

As those stood weeping by, who rais'd his head,
And did, what could be done, around his bed;
He saw their Toil, and Care, and thank'd their great good-will;
But cry'd, "'Tis best of all, that God is with us still."

That "God is with us" still, he Thrice declar'd,
And Thrice look'd up, and saw his vast Reward!
Then cry'd, "Through Jesu's Blood the Holiest Place I gain;"
And strove to raise his voice, and sung his fav'rite strain:

[" I'll praise my Maker, while I've breath,
" And when my voice is lost in death
" Praise shall employ my nobler powers :
" My days of praise shall ne'er be past,
" While Life, or Thought, or Being last,
" Or immortality endures.

" Happy the man whose hopes rely
" On Israel's God ; he made the sky,

" And

“ And Earth, and Seas, with all their train !
 “ His Truth for ever stands secure,
 “ He saves th’ oppress’d, he feeds the poor,
 “ And none shall find his promise vain.”]

His Nights for ever fled, the Morn appear’d,
 Which brought the signs of Woe we long had fear’d !
 He Hail’d the Happy Day, and then Triumphant cry’d, [dy’d !
 “ I’ll praise !—I’ll praise !—Farewel !”—then clos’d his eyes and

O ruthless Death ! how fixt thy stern decree ;
 Since He must fall a sacrifice to Thee !
 Since Him we valu’d Most, as Best of all our race,
 Could no exemption find, or gain a longer space.

O cheerless light ! O inauspicious day !
 Which mock’d our Fears, and bore our Guide away ;
 And left us wand’ring here, with thousand Cares oppress’d,
 Without his wonted Aid, to ease our troubled breast.

The

The pensive Dove, whene'er his Mate is fled,
Coos round, and round, then droops his languid head;
And shall not We complain, who feel a heav'ér load!
We must; we can't refrain, while in this dark abode.

As Ifr'el mourn'd of old, his Fav'rite gone;
As Rachel mourn'd, her fertile plains along;
As Mary mourn'd and wept, beneath her Saviour's Cross;
So we, with Moans and Tears, will now lament our Loss.

But though we now lament, the Day is nigh,
When we shall meet again, above the sky;
And there our songs unite, and join the radiant Throng,
And bow before the Throne, and bless the Great Three One!

Then let us still maintain the Truth he taught,
And Faithful prove, in Deed, and Word, and Thought:
The path he trod before, let us through life pursue,
And help each other on, and keep the Prize in view.

But

But chiefly We, who bear his sacred Shame,
 Who feed his Flock, and still revere his Name;
 Let us unite in one, and strive with mutual care,
 To help his Children on, and all their burthens bear.

For this, let us like Him, the world disdain;
 For this, like Him rejoice in Toil and Pain;
 Like Him be bold for God; like Him our Time Redeem:
 And Strive, and Watch, and Pray; and Live and Die like Him.



F I N I S.

